

8. The situation in Hungary: The inability of the Kadar regime to demonstrate authority or influence has become increasingly apparent in Hungary. A group of Soviet leaders including Mikoyan, Suslov and possibly Khrushchev were reportedly in Budapest on 12 November in an effort to restore order and shape up the local Communist leadership.

No Soviet troop movements in Hungary have been reported since the withdrawal of a number of Soviet tanks and motorized equipment from Budapest on the evening of 8 November. The situation in the Hungarian capital remained tense as Soviet soldiers continued a house-to-house search for insurgents who, reportedly, were holding out because of uncertainty as to whether or not they would be shot after surrender. Scattered rebel groups--waging guerrilla warfare--in Budapest and the provinces continue to resist Soviet forces and Hungarian security police.

The population in Budapest had not yet returned to work on 10 November; transportation remained at a standstill, and food was scarce as numbers of people in Budapest searched for bread, in disregard of the Soviet-imposed curfew. Soviet forces continue to keep Budapest isolated in an apparent attempt to end all resistance by starvation.

The Kadar regime, faced with the monumental task of restoring order, has been relatively frank in its public discussions of the present "grave" state of affairs. Its current program--restated on 11 November--emphasizes the need for economic order by urging a return to work and the restoration of transportation facilities, and the maintenance of civil order. The regime has appealed to the population to support the "liberal and national" Communist aims of the government.

Premier Kadar's efforts to gain popular support have included, in addition to his earlier promises of a free and independent Hungary which will negotiate for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, assurances of the continued use of the Kossuth national emblem which was officially adopted by the Nagy regime, the continued "freedom" of the trade unions, and a substantial increase in workers' wages. A press report claims that, in an additional attempt to woo the public, Kadar recently conferred with ex-premier Nagy--presumably in an effort to persuade Nagy to join the government. The regime has condemned Nagy for his tactics during the revolution, but has not accused him of treachery and has denied reports of his arrest.

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The ability of the Kadar government to impose its will by alternately issuing promises, pleas and decrees is, at best, dubious. The regime's authority at present is weak and its organs are still in the process of reorganization. Most workers appear to be on strike, most of the Hungarian army has been dissolved or disarmed, and the Hungarian police forces have proved themselves inadequate to maintain order. The population can be expected to withhold its support as long as Soviet troops remain in Hungary and as long as the present ruling duumvirate of Kadar and Muennich remains in power.

